

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1, 2, 6, 11, 12, 14, 15, 19, 21, 26, 29, 31, 36, 37, 39-45, 47, 48, 53-58, 61, 62, 75, 87 and 88.

Please add new claims 89-99. Please cancel claims 4, 23, 27, 28, 59, 60, 66-74, 77, 78, 81, 82, 85 and 86. Claims 5, 30 and 63-65 were previously canceled without prejudice. Pending claims 1-3, 6-22, 24-26, 29, 31-58, 61, 62, 75, 76, 79, 80, 83, 84 and 87-99 follow.

1. (Currently Amended) A cooking apparatus for preparing a food item in a microwave oven, comprising:

a microwaveable housing having a lower housing section and an upper housing section, each housing section defining an interior space, the upper housing section being placed on top of the lower housing section to close the microwaveable housing; and

a grill positioned within said lower housing section and suspended above a bottom interior surface of said lower housing section, said grill defining a plurality of apertures and having a surface that includes a metalized susceptor material for having a surface for supporting grilling the food item, wherein thereon; and a solid or semi-solid gelatinous ingredient for the food item that is, wherein said gelatinous ingredient is not extracted from the food item being prepared;

said lower housing section and said grill are structurally configured so that, said gelatinous ingredient, and the food item being contained within said microwaveable housing for heating in the microwave oven steam generated by heating a said gelatinous ingredient that is not extracted from the food item being prepared and being positioned on said bottom surface of said lower housing section below said grill so that when said gelatinous ingredient is heated, said gelatinous ingredient at least partially liquefies or melts from the solid or semi-solid state passes upwardly from said interior space of said lower housing section, through said grill apertures, onto at least a bottom surface of the food item, and into said interior space of said upper housing section and generates steam, the steam being applied to the food item.

2. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a support member extending from an interior surface of said lower housing section microwaveable housing including a support member, said grill being placed on said support member.

3. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1, said microwaveable housing including a vent through which steam is released.

4-5 (Canceled).

6. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, steam that rises from said interior space of said lower housing section and through said grill apertures ~~from heating said gelatinous ingredient~~ including a flavoring that is applied to the food item.

7. (Original) The apparatus of claim 6, the flavoring comprising a charcoal flavoring.

8. (Original) The apparatus of claim 6, the flavoring comprising a beef flavoring.

9. (Original) The apparatus of claim 6, the flavoring comprising a barbeque flavoring.

10. (Original) The apparatus of claim 6, the flavoring comprising a lemon flavoring.

11. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, steam that rises from said interior space of said lower housing section and through said grill apertures ~~from heating said gelatinous ingredient~~ including an aroma that is applied to the food item.

12. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, steam that rises from said interior space of said lower housing section and through said grill apertures ~~from heating said gelatinous ingredient~~ including a coloring that is applied to the food item.

13. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, the coloring comprising a caramel coloring.

14. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 1, said grill being structurally configured so that the apertures defined by said grill being arranged so that

a liquid from the heated food item can drain downwardly passes through said grill the apertures to said a bottom interior surface section of said microwaveable lower housing section, and steam from the heated gelatinous ingredient passes upwardly from said interior space of said lower housing section, through said grill apertures, onto the food item, and into said interior space of said upper housing section.

15. (Currently Amended) A microwave cooking apparatus for preparing a food item in a microwave oven, comprising:

a microwaveable housing having a lower housing section and an upper housing section, each housing section defining an interior space, said upper housing section being placed on top of said lower housing section to close said microwaveable housing;

a support member extending from an interior surface of ~~in~~ said lower housing section; and
a grill positioned within said lower housing section and suspended above a bottom interior surface of said lower housing section by said support member, said grill having a surface for grilling supporting the food item thereon and, said grill defining a plurality apertures, wherein and being placed on said support member; and

said lower housing section and said grill are structurally configured so that steam generated by heating a gelatinous ingredient for the food item that is, wherein said gelatinous ingredient is not extracted from the food item being prepared and positioned on said bottom interior surface of said gelatinous ingredient being located in said lower housing section and below said grill so that steam from heating said gelatinous ingredient can pass upwardly from said interior space of said lower housing section, through said grill apertures, onto at least a bottom surface of the food item, and into said interior space of said upper housing section, and liquid from the heated food item can pass downwardly from the heated food item, through said grill apertures, and said bottom interior surface of said lower housing section is applied to the food item through the apertures of said grill.

16. (Original) The apparatus of claim 15, further comprising a connector that couples said lower and upper microwave housing sections together.

17. (Original) The apparatus of claim 16, said connector comprising a flexible connector.

18. (Previously Amended) The apparatus of claim 15, said support members comprising a ridge extending from an interior surface of said lower housing section, said grill being placed on said ridge.

19. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 15, said support members comprising a plurality of base members extending upwardly from said an interior ~~bottom interior~~ surface of said lower housing section.

20. (Original) The apparatus of claim 15, said upper housing section defining a vent aperture through which steam is released.

21. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 15, further comprising a vent attached to a top surface of said upper housing section, said vent defining one or more ~~vent~~ apertures through which steam can be released.
22. (Original) The apparatus of claim 21, said vent being adjustable.
23. (Canceled).
24. (Original) The apparatus of claim 15, said grill surface being coated with a susceptor material.
25. (Original) The apparatus of claim 24, said susceptor material comprising a metalized susceptor material.
26. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 24, said susceptor material allowing being selected so that said grill surface to reaches a sufficiently high temperature and marks the food item with a pattern of said grill surface.
- 27-28. (Canceled).
29. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 15, said bottom interior surface of said lower housing section defining a reservoir, the said gelatinous ingredient being positioned in said a reservoir ~~formed in said lower housing section~~.
30. (Canceled).
31. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 15, steam that rises from said interior space of said lower housing section and through said grill apertures ~~from heating said gelatinous ingredient~~ including a flavoring that is applied to the food item.
32. (Original) The apparatus of claim 31, the flavoring comprising a charcoal flavoring.
33. (Original) The apparatus of claim 31, the flavoring comprising a beef flavoring.
34. (Original) The apparatus of claim 31, the flavoring comprising a barbeque flavoring.
35. (Original) The apparatus of claim 31, the flavoring comprising a lemon flavoring.
36. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 31, steam that rises from said interior space of said lower housing section and through said grill apertures ~~from heating said gelatinous ingredient~~ including an aroma that is applied to the food item.
37. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 31, steam that rises from said interior space of said lower housing section and through said grill apertures ~~from heating said gelatinous ingredient~~ including a coloring that is applied to the food item.

38. (Original) The apparatus of claim 37, the coloring comprising a caramel coloring.
39. (Currently Amended) A packaged food product for heating in a microwave oven, comprising:
a microwaveable housing having a lower housing section and an upper housing section, each housing section defining an interior space, the upper housing section being placed on top of the lower housing section to close the microwaveable housing;
a support member extending from an interior surface of ~~located in~~ said lower housing section;
a food item;
a grill positioned within said lower housing section and suspended above a bottom interior surface of said lower housing section by said support member, said grill defining a plurality grill apertures and having a surface for supporting grilling said food item thereon, said grill being placed on said support member; and
a gelatinous ingredient for said food item, wherein said gelatinous ingredient is not extracted from said the food item being prepared and is positioned on said bottom interior surface of said ~~gelatinous ingredient being located in~~ said lower housing section and below said grill,
wherein said packaged food product is structurally configured so that when the packaged food product is microwaveable housing including said food item, said grill, said gelatinous ingredient, said support member, said gelatinous ingredient being heated in the microwave oven, so that steam from said heated gelatinous ingredient generates steam that rises upwardly from said interior space of said bottom housing section, through the plurality of apertures of said grill apertures, onto at least a bottom surface of said heated food item, and into said interior space of said upper housing section.
40. (Currently Amended) The packaged food product of claim 39, said support member comprising a ridge ~~extending from an interior surface of said lower housing section.~~
41. (Currently Amended) The packaged food product of claim 39, said support member comprising a plurality of base members extending upwardly from said bottom ~~an interior bottom~~ surface of said lower housing section.
42. (Currently Amended) The packaged food product of claim 39, further comprising a vent in one of the housing sections, said vent defining an aperture, wherein ~~the~~ steam is released through the ~~vent~~ aperture.

43. (Currently Amended) The packaged food product of claim 42, said upper housing section including said vent ~~comprising a vent defined by said upper housing section~~.
44. (Currently Amended) The packaged food product of claim 42, said vent being attached to a top ~~surface~~ of said top housing section.
45. (Currently Amended) The packaged food product of claim 39, wherein liquid from ~~heating~~ said heated food item can pass downwardly from said heated food item, drips down through said grill the plurality of apertures defined by said grill and onto said bottom interior surface of ~~into~~ said lower housing section.
46. (Original) The packaged food product of claim 39, said grill surface being coated with a metalized susceptor material.
47. (Currently Amended) The packaged food product of claim 39, said bottom surface of said lower housing section defining a reservoir, said gelatinous ingredient being positioned in said a reservoir ~~in a bottom of said lower housing section~~.
48. (Currently Amended) The packaged food product of claim 39, further comprising an inert gas, said inert gas being added into said microwaveable housing, and said microwaveable housing being sealed with said food item, said gelatinous ingredient, said support member, said grill surface, and said inert gas therein.
49. (Original) The packaged food product of claim 39, said microwaveable housing being sealed and evacuated of air.
50. (Original) The packaged food product of claim 39, said food item being beef, chicken, pork or a vegetable.
51. (Original) The packaged food product of claim 39, further comprising a connector that couples said lower and upper microwave housing sections together.
52. (Previously Amended) The packaged food product of claim 51, said connector comprising a flexible connector.

53. (Previously Amended) A method of preparing a food item in a microwave oven, comprising:
providing a packaged food product, the packaged food producing including
a microwaveable housing having a lower housing section and an upper housing
section, each housing section defining an interior space,
a grill positioned within said lower housing section and being suspended above a
bottom surface of said lower housing section, the grill having a surface for grilling supporting the
food item thereon and defining apertures,
a food item, and
a gelatinous ingredient for the food item, wherein the gelatinous ingredient is not
extracted from the food item being prepared, and the grill, the gelatinous ingredient, and the food
item are being contained within the microwaveable housing; and
arranging the food item on the grill surface so that the gelatinous ingredient is positioned in a
reservoir of the microwaveable housing below the grill; and
heating the packaged food product in microwaveable housing, the grill, the food item, and the
gelatinous ingredient with the microwave oven so that the food item is heated and the gelatinous
ingredient is heated and at least partially liquefies or melts from a solid or semi-solid state, wherein
the heated gelatinous ingredient generates steam that rises upwardly from the interior space of the
lower housing section, steam from the heated gelatinous ingredient rises through the grill apertures,
and onto at least a bottom surface of the food item, and into the interior space of the upper housing
section.
54. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 53, further comprising releasing steam ~~in the~~
~~microwaveable housing~~ through a vent defined in a ~~top surface of~~ the microwaveable housing.
55. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 53, further comprising, before providing a
packaged food product, heating, applying a metalized susceptor layer to the grill surface so that
when the grill surface is sufficiently heated, the food item is marked with a pattern of the heated grill
surface.
56. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 53, steam generated by heating ~~from the heated~~
gelatinous ingredient including a flavoring that is applied to the food item.
57. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 53, steam generated by heating ~~from the heated~~
gelatinous ingredient including a scent or an aroma that is applied to the food item.

58. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 53, steam generated by heating from the heated gelatinous ingredient including a coloring that is applied to the food item.

59-60. (Canceled).

61. (Currently Amended). The packaged food product of claim 39, said ~~the~~ gelatinous ingredient having a defined shape until being heated.

62. (Currently Amended). The method of claim 53, ~~providing~~ the gelatinous ingredient ~~comprising providing a gelatinous ingredient~~ having a defined shape until being heated.

63-74. (Canceled).

75. (Currently Amended). The packaged food product of claim 39, wherein said ~~the~~ gelatinous ingredient comprises a corn syrup ingredient and an agar ingredient.

76. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 53, providing said gelatinous ingredient comprising providing a gelatinous ingredient including a corn syrup ingredient and an agar ingredient.

77-78. (Canceled).

79. (Previously Presented) The packaged food product of claim 39, wherein the gelatinous ingredient is initially applied to the food item during heating in the microwave oven.

80. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 53, wherein the gelatinous ingredient is initially applied to the food item during heating in the microwave oven.

81-82. (Canceled).

83. (Previously Presented) The packaged food product of claim 39, wherein the gelatinous ingredient is contained within the bottom portion of the microwaveable housing prior to heating.

84. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 53, wherein the gelatinous ingredient is contained within the bottom portion of the microwaveable housing prior to heating.

85-86. (Canceled).

87. (Currently Amended) The packaged food product of claim 39, wherein said ~~the~~ gelatinous ingredient is in a solid or semi-solid state when placed in said bottom housing section ~~the microwaveable housing~~.

88. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 53, wherein the gelatinous ingredient is in a solid or semi-solid state when placed in the bottom microwaveable housing section.

89. (New) The apparatus of claim 1 being disposable.

90. (New) The apparatus of claim 15 being disposable.
91. (New) The packaged food product of claim 39 being disposable.
92. (New) The method of claim 53, further comprising:
removing the heated food item from the microwaveable housing; and
discarding the remaining portions of the packaged food product.
93. (New) The apparatus of claim 1, the microwaveable housing being shaped as a rectangle, a square, a circle, or an ellipse.
94. (New) The apparatus of claim 15, the microwaveable housing being shaped as a rectangle, a square, a circle, or an ellipse.
95. (New) The packaged food product of claim 39, the microwaveable housing being shaped as a rectangle, a square, a circle, or an ellipse.
96. (New) The method of claim 53, wherein providing the packaged food product comprises providing a packaged food producing including a microwaveable housing being shaped as a rectangle, a square, a circle, or an ellipse.
97. (New) The packaged food product of claim 39, wherein the food item is a fish, a beef, a poultry, a pork, a vegetable, or a soybean food item.
98. (New) The method of claim 53, providing the packaged food product comprising providing a packaged food product having a fish, a beef, a poultry, a pork, a vegetable, or a soybean food item.
99. (New) A packaged food product for heating in a microwave oven, comprising:
a microwaveable housing;
a food item;
a grill positioned within a lower housing section of said microwaveable housing, said grill defining a plurality apertures and having a surface for grilling said food item; and
a gelatinous ingredient for said food item, wherein
said gelatinous ingredient is not extracted from said food item being prepared and is positioned in said lower housing section below said grill, and
said microwaveable housing and said grill are structurally configured so that steam generated by heating said gelatinous ingredient can pass upwardly through said grill apertures, and liquid draining from said food item can pass downwardly through said grill apertures to said lower housing section.